(e) what steps have been taken to prevent misuse of the bus service for smuggling and illegal traffic of arms, drugs and humans?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (e) During the second round of India-Pakistan technical meeting held in September 2005 on the subject, it was decided to operationalize the Amritsar-Lahore bus service by first half of November 2005. The operationalisation of the bus service was, however, postponed due to the earthquake that hit Pakistan on October 8, 2005. Fresh dates for the trial run and the signing of the agreement are being worked out with Pakistan. Government will take all security implications into consideration, and people will be able to travel on the bus only after due procedure and checks have been completed.

Indo-Iran gas pipeline project

†191. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA:
SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there would be any negative impact on gas pipeline project as India is not supporting the nuclear programme of Iran;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of Government of Iran in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (c) The Iranian Embassy in New Delhi had clarified on September 28, 2005 that agreements on the LNG deal and gas pipeline between the two countries were "still in force and passing through their normal process." Talks on the Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline project are progressing. The 2nd Indo-Iran Special Joint Working Group on gas pipeline project was held in Tehran on October 24, 2005.

Foreign Minister's Pakistan visit

†192. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the former Minister of External Affairs was on a tour of Pakistan recently;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the issues on which he had a dialogue with the Government of Pakistan and the issues on which both of them reached on a consensus;

(c) whether it is a fact that even today infiltration of terrorists is going on from Pakistan's border; and

(d) if so, the steps being taken by the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) The former EAM, Shri K. Natwar Singh, visited Pakistan from 2 to 5 October 2005. He and the Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Khursheed M. Kasuri reviewed the progress in the second round of the composite Dialogue and chaired the plenary meeting of the revived India-Pakistan Joint Commission. During his visit, he met President Musharraf and Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz and discussed bilateral issues of mutual concern. During this visit, both sides agreed to undertake a joint survey of the Sir Creek itself, and to consider options for the delimitation of the India-Pakistan maritime boundary. The Agreement on Pre-Notification of Flight Testing of Ballistic Missiles and the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Establishment of a Communication Link between the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency and the Indian Coast Guards were signed in the presence of the two Foreign Ministers.

(c) and (d) Infiltration continues across the LoC/IB in Jammu and Kashmir. The level of infiltration this year is almost the same as last year. Government has, in its interaction with Pakistan at all levels, continuously streesed the fact Pakistan has not taken any effective action to dismantle the infrastructure of support to terrorism on a permanent basis. Government has made it clear to Pakistan that the premise on which the present dialogue process is based is the commitment of January 6, 2004 by Pakistan not to permit any territory under Pakistan's control to be used to support terrorism in any manner.

Indo-China talks held in New York

†193. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the bilateral issues discussed by the Prime Minister of India and the President of China during their meeting in New York and the issues on which they arrived at consensus; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.